

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RETIREMENT OF GENERAL ROSSO JOSE SERRANO AS THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the resignation this week of General Rosso Jose Serrano, as Director General of the Colombian National Police, has been met with sadness by those of us who have known him and assisted his efforts in the War on Drugs. He was a bright light to the United States during a dark period of U.S.-Colombian relations. His 40 years in law enforcement and his accomplishments stand as a testimony to the adage that "one man can make a difference."

General Serrano is a true hero in the War on Drugs, just as Drug Enforcement Administration (D.E.A.) Administrator Donnie Marshall termed him earlier this week. F.B.I. Director Louis Freeh accurately described General Serrano as a "Cop's Cop." I speak for many of my colleagues in this House who have been to war-torn Colombia, when I call him a "true inspiration to those who cherish the rule of law." Few men have equaled what this quiet policeman from the farmlands of north-eastern Colombia has accomplished.

I know of no other lawman who has faced down the type of ruthless druglords that General Serrano has, and lived to tell about it. At a time when Colombia was synonymous with corruption and drug crime, General Serrano stood tall to enforce the rule of law, when others hid.

In the early 1990's, General Serrano commanded the anti-narcotics agents of the world-famous D.A.N.T.I. These men and women worked hand-in-hand with our D.E.A. in fighting the drug lords in Colombia. As a result of General Serrano's leadership, and with the D.E.A.'s assistance, they dismantled the infamous Medellin Cartel and brought its vicious leader, Pablo Escobar, to final justice on the rooftop of his hiding place, in December 1993.

He then led the destruction of the Calia Cartel by arresting the leadership of this deadly drug mafia. Today, these drug lords sit in prison, awaiting extradition to courts in the United States. In Colombia, five years ago, these victories were thought to be impossible. These astounding efforts came at great cost, however, with the Colombian National Police losing over 5,000 officers to drug cartel violence.

In 1996, General Serrano was invited to testify before the United States Congress, to tell his own story of how the arrogant drug lords were brought to justice, at a time when justice was laughed at in Colombia. General Serrano accomplished this huge task despite overwhelming odds and great danger to his forces. By his plain-spoken words and his reputation for honesty, he enlisted many Congressmen, from both sides of the aisle, in supporting his anti-narcotics efforts, when the Clinton Administration withheld support.

Today, I stand in the halls of the U.S. Congress to hail the extraordinary efforts of a man who has always claimed he was just an ordinary citizen of Colombia. I take great pride in saying that Rosso Jose Serrano, the very extraordinary man from the farmlands of north-eastern Colombia, is my friend. I would like to remind the people of America that "one man can make a difference," and that in our joint war against narco-terrorism, General Serrano made that difference. The American people owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

TRIBUTE TO RALPH THOMPSON, JR.

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, "Working Hard" is a phrase often spoken casually in conversation and this act seen exemplified is rare. However, Mr. Ralph Thompson, Jr. did prove so as an Attorney on the Monterey Peninsula. Thompson understood the value of hard work in his career as well as his personal pursuits. Over his years, Thompson dedicated his time and energy to his "labor of love"—Little League. Yet, on February 28, 2000, at the age of 80, Thompson's commitments to his laborious loves were ended.

Born in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, Mr. Ralph Thompson, Jr., exemplified this in his daily work ethic. After earning his law degree from Stanford University in 1948, he then moved to Carmel where he joined the Thompson & Thompson law firm. Following his initial success at Thompson & Thompson, Mr. Ralph Thompson later became a partner at Hudson, Wyckoff, Parker, and Thompson in 1961. Thompson found later acclaim, in his personal life, as a Little League coach as he was awarded the Chief Justice Phil Gibson Award from the Monterey County Bar Association for his outstanding public service.

Peers of Thompson, spoke of him highly, often noting that he would be remembered as a "litigator with a heart." Another friend of Thompson's recounted him as being a mentor and teacher, "who taught [him] all that [he] knows[s] about practicing law." Thompson's courtroom life never strayed to his family life. Known as a 'tiger in the courtroom', he was also seen as a "warm, family man."

As we remember Mr. Ralph Thompson, let us remember his many fine accomplishments as a husband, father, coach, friend and mentor. In time, hard work pays off and leaves pride in the hearts of those who knew and loved Thompson. He is survived by his wife, Joan; his four sons, Lawrence, William, R. Cole, and Douglas; two daughters, Nancy Eskilon and Beth Carpenter; and 14 grandchildren.

CONGRATULATING THE ARMENIAN RELIEF SOCIETY

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Armenian Relief Society on celebrating 90 years of providing assistance to the Glendale, CA area.

As a nonprofit organization, the Armenian Relief Society provides a broad range of services to the Armenian community. It gives humanitarian aid, offers translation services, helps the homeless, and offers English as a second language classes to new immigrants. The agency also offers assistance in health care, job referrals, placement, and in finding housing.

The agency has branches in 23 counties, with 18,000 members and 1,400 volunteers in the western United States. To this day, the Armenian Relief Society is still called upon to help the Armenian people and to preserve the cultural identity of the Armenian nation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Armenian Relief Society as they celebrate 90 years of service. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing the Armenian Relief Society many more years of continued success.

HONORING ELIZABETH KIMMEL-HIEKEN

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Elizabeth Kimmel-Hieken for her outstanding contributions to the community. For more than 40 years in the labor movement, Liz Kimmel has tirelessly organized workers, walked picket lines, fed the unemployed, marched for civil rights, lobbied the legislature, and pioneered the way for more women and minorities in trade unionism.

The Harris County AFL-CIO is honoring Liz on her 85th birthday this month, for her more than four decades of valuable service to the labor movement and to the greater Houston community.

Texas has been fortunate to have such a daughter. Liz Kimmel arrived in Texas in 1947 to help organize union activities. She ended up staying for the latter half of the century, and our workers, our senior citizens, the handicapped, and the poor are better off for it.

The labor movement and the community have benefitted from Liz's clarity, wisdom and constant dedication. She is among those inspiring leaders responsible for helping to eventually expand the labor movement through what was then a new, emerging public employee union, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

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